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MONGST all the Vices which disfigure Human Nature, I know of none more incurable in its Causes, or more mischievous in its Effects, than Indolence. It is a Rust which seizes the Rational Faculties, and appears soonest on the brightest. One cannot describe its Sym-

Shape of Amusements; as destructive Drams are introduced under the Title of Cordial Waters.—But to return.

Indolence is more indulg'd than any other Vice, because it seems less harmful. I amuse myself, says an Indolent Person, in my own Way; I saunter in the Piazza's, I nod over a Paper at the Coffee-house, or I look upon Two People playing at Picquet for Two Hours, or so: And what is this to the rest of the World?—Not much truly; but it is a great deal to yourself: your Time might have been much better employ'd.—My Time is my own:—Yes, so, in the same Sense, is your Threat; and the same happy Train of Argument which will justify the killing the one (as the modish Phrase is) will as properly apologize for cutting the other. But it may be objected, that there is no Comparison between killing one's Time, and killing one's self: But this, upon Examination, will not be found true. The Life of the Soul is, as all agree, Rational Speculation: But Indolence is the very Reverse of this; and therefore may be, with Propriety enough, styled *Spiritual Suicide*. Neither is this a Flourish but a Fact. As far as the Soul is capable of Death, she really endures it from Indolence; and even in the Gratification of his worst Vice a Man is not less rational than in thus indulging the Laziness of Mind; which is the Reason why this Ill Quality takes so fast hold, because it consumes gradually those Spirits which are necessary to enable the Patient to shake it off. Then it is a cruel and dangerous Disease which preys upon the Mind, and while it actually unmans us, deprives us also of the Means of Recovery.

From these Considerations I apprehend it will be manifest, that Indolence ought not to be slightly thought of, a Quality of a neutral Nature, and evil only as it is circumstanced; but that we ought to regard it as a most dangerous Malady, which, unless timely remov'd, may prove fatal both to our Vices and our Senses. For what Reliance can there be on one who is subject to fall into a State of Inactivity, wherein whatever is solid appears burthensome? Surely none at all. Whence we hear it daily assign'd as a Reason why a Man of Distinction does not enjoy the Honours due to his Rank, that he is an indolent Man, that is, a Man who sleeps thro' Life, and has only lucid Intervals of Understanding. To avoid such a Character is without question the Business of every Man endued with Reason, and therefore, after having shewn the Causes and Consequence of this mental Disorder, I proceed as becomes me to speak of the Method of Cure, and the Means that may be used to free those who labour under this Malady, from its Sway, and to preserve such as are not already infected therewith from falling under its Power. But before we meddled with this, it was proper to prepare the Patient, by shewing him his Danger, and the Importance of following these or some other Rules for the avoiding this Lethargy of our own procuring.

We must, previous to all other Helps, use this, of gaining a just Idea of Relaxation. There is nothing more certain, than that the Body cannot always support Labour, or the Mind the Fatigue of attending to one thing. But we mistake when we suppose that the same Sort of Rest which is necessary to the Body, is likewise necessary, or even expedient for the Mind. The Body has need of a certain Space of Inaction, to recruit those Spirits by which it acts; but it is quite otherwise with the Soul, which has no need of Sleep, but as it is connected with the Body. The Refreshment of Spirits, properly so call'd, consists in a Succession of Employments, and in nothing else. We are amaz'd when we contemplate the mighty Performances of some great Genius; such a one, for Example, as Erasmus, Sir Francis Bacon, or Mr. Selden, we can scarce believe that a Man cou'd be profoundly skill'd in so many things, and yet spare so much time from his Studies as to write a Multitude of Books, and go thro' the Business also of an important Office. But this is the Fruit of Epidemick Indolence, since if we allow ourselves to suppose the waking Hours of a Man of good Sense spent in successive Employments for thirty Years, we shall soon be able to comprehend how he may master many Sciences, when four or five Languages are sometimes required by Children by the time they are twelve Years old; and when we conceive this, we can no more dispute the Possibility of

successive Employment being sufficient Relaxation to the Soul. This Point being once settled, the very Core of Indolence is cut out. To relieve ourselves when we are weary of any thing, we need not have Recourse to doing nothing, because, doing some other thing will answer the proposed End better.

It is an excellent Caution against Indolence, to require every Evening an Account of the Day's Employment, in order to resolve this Question: Whether Time has been spent in a Manner worthy of a rational Creature. In this we are all equal; the greatest and the meanest Man is alike acc unabl. in this respect; and a very sorry Account it is an idle or an indolent Person can give. Another good Rule is, To consider whatever we do, and the Ends of doing it; which will prevent our being occupied foolishly, like Domitian, in killing of Flies. A Man who walks in the Fields for the sake of Exercise, employs his Eyes in viewing, and his Mind in contemplating the Objects round him, is rationally busy. Whereas he who walks the same Spot purely to kill an Hour, whilst as he stalks for want of Thought, and comes home just as wife as when he went out, is very little better than his Dog Tray, who was very probably engag'd the same Way. It is not what we do, but the Intention is doing, which distinguishes the wise Man from the Fool. When *Augustus* indulg'd himself among his little Grandchildren, it was wisely done; because he followed the Dictates of his Reason, which permitted him as a Parent to venture on such a Condescension; but if a Stranger of his Age had done the same thing, it would have been ridiculous.

The searching out laudable Methods of spending Time is a good Fence against Indolence. To those who like Books, they are the pleasantest, and, at the same time, the most rational Amusement. But where Habit has establish'd a Dislike to Reading, there remain many other Ways of passing Time; as cultivating a Garden, practising some easy Mechanick Art, or engaging in the Business of some publick-spirited and useful Society. But these are easily recommended to such as having an habitual Indolence are desirous to shake it off, and therefore stand in need of such Prescriptions: As for those who have never felt this stupifying Quality, they are left to their own Election in Employments, provided they are rational, and not detrimental to the Performance of any of those Duties to which by their Situation in Life they are bound. To say the plain Truth, there are few Stations in which, if Men would exercise their Faculties, and resolve to do all the Good within the Compass of their Abilities, that would need Advice on the head of what are properly call'd Amusements. It is our Misfortune, that too many in the present Age are not ashamed to profess they make it their Business to find Amusements, and those too none of the Best Sort.

R. FREEMAN.

Yesterday arriv'd a Mail from Holland.

Dresden, Sept. 9. N. S.

THE King's and Queen's Departure for Poland is fix'd for the 22d Instant. The Princesses will set out on the 12th. The Electoral Prince arriv'd here two Days ago from his Travels, but last from Vienna, to the great Joy of their Majesties and the whole Court, and made a magnificent Entry.

Hanover, Sept. 9. N. S. The King's Departure for Lintzbourg is fix'd for the 21st Instant, and 'tis believ'd he will stay about a Fortnight there, to hunt the Stag and the Wild Boar. His Majesty has receiv'd Advice from Cassel of the Arrival of Prince Frederic and his Princess and Sister there in perfect Health.

Hamburg, Sept. 9. N. S. They write from Berlin, that Orders are come thither to prepare a Train of Artillery, in order to be sent by Water to Wessel; and from Copenhagen, that General Niemars is arriv'd there from Stockholm, with a Commission from his Swedish Majesty to the King of Denmark.

Frankfort, Sept. 12. N. S. We hear from Vienna, that the Turkish Ambassador had his first Publick Audience of the Emperor on the 2d Instant, with the same Ceremony as was observ'd in 1719, and that after delivering his Presents he made a Speech to the Emperor in the Turkish Language, and presented a Letter to him from the Grand Signier.

Cleves,

